

THE FREEDMEN OF THE SOUTHWEST.
SPEECH OF W. F. MITCHELL.
At a meeting of the Pennsylvania Freedmen's Relief Association, held in Philadelphia, Nov. 21st 1864.
Reported for the Anti-Slavery Standard.

I HAVE left my distant field of labor, and am here to-night, strong in the faith of a great and good cause. Here to speak to Philadelphia of what Pennsylvania

violence, is doing in a land where the shackles are being loosed, and the day of freedom is dawning. Here they represent a band of devoted teachers who, amid

the light of knowledge and of truth. Here to present the claims of thousands of emancipated women and

tion and distress. Here to present their cause and
more to those who have already proved themselves

of the soldier and the admiration of the patriot.

I do not see how it is possible to form any estimate of their numbers. They meet you at every turn. The

gements to give them. They swarm the station during the posts, and are among the bravest defenders of the nation's life.

Just east of Nashville, we have a colored population estimated at from ten to fifteen thousand. The colored population of this city before the war was about twenty thousand, so that the number of colored refugees here gathered is more than one-half that of the original inhabitants. Of these the Contraband Camp contains a moiety, say 600, while in every direction the colored mechanics, laborers, and government employees are rapidly rising. They are all builders and though many of these dwellings are half shanties there are among them such as display considerable skill and taste.

The Contraband Camp and the two principal villages are nearly in a line, but a little distance apart, while directly between the two clusters of houses stands Pennsylvania Lodge, the residence of our delegation of teachers at this post. A little further on is the W. P. C. school, No. 1 of our Association; while at the camp beyond will soon rise the walls of the first colored high school for the people in Tennessee. This school here numbers about 250, and the others will be organized in the new house will embrace a like number.

Those who are accustomed to associate good schools with pleasant surroundings, nice furniture, and educational appliances, will be disappointed to find a poor school, with but few appliances, and no furniture. It is not calculated to impress the visitor greatly. But the seats are all full; the faces all eager; the teachers are well trained, and the Principal a graduate of Pennsylvania Normal School.

The educational advantages proffered to the colored youth here are of no mean order. The teachers are the best instructors, supplied with the highest moral influence, and a life-long devotion to the cause are placed within their reach, and they are appreciated.

Little the freed people know of the great Commonwealth, with its boundless resources and tempting opportunities.

The rapid improvement of colored children in school learning is a point so well established that our statistics are not needed to prove it. In the colored school at this place, which has been organized but six weeks among a pure, yet ignorant population, and there is a demand for geography, arithmetic and interesting reading-books. It is certainly some evidence of progress.

At the colored school at this place, the children are mulattoes. Some are to be visited; clothing is inspected, and supplied when needed; letters to be written for soldiers' wives; while on the Sabbath, the children are gathered under a measure of that influence which is the result of the teacher appointed in the village Sunday-school, in the far off valley of the Sanguis.

Let me here introduce a teacher's memorandum of a day's missionary work, directly connected with her position.

"We have to-day visited some of the cabins which have sprung up, as if by magic, around us, for the purpose of finding those who have the greatest claim upon our charities; and my heart is full of the suffering and the needs of our race and initiation. I have heard. Some of these people are more destitute than they were once as slaves, yet they are willing to be re-

days when this dark storm-cloud of war shall have passed by.

The suffering of some of these people is heart-rending. We found one poor woman, past middle life, living in a miserable condemned Sibley tent, full of rents and holes, which was no protection whatever from the rain and cold. The mother of the pastor's wife lived in a hole in the wall of the same tent. Her husband had died in the army, and she was with three fatherless children, without fire or food, and with but a few tattered rags for clothing. One of the Sibley tents was blown down, and a broken-down wagon, as if it had been too old to hold together, was blown over. There were little things, and their faces lighted up very pleasantly at the least kind notice. She had never labored for her support until exposure and suffering had driven her to it. She said that she would be willing to help themselves, nothing but charity stood between them and starvation.

"In one hut we found a mother, daughter and daughter-in-law. They were all morning sick to us for food. All day long we were ill and unable to move. The mother and daughter were old and bent with age, and her son, her only support, was employed on a gunboat; and as months had elapsed since he had been heard from, they supposed he had perished. The implication that they were forsaken by the Divine Providence, with so few means of support. The poor old creature is firm in the belief that the Lord will take care of them, and her

"As a proof of their willingness to help themselves, it was really thought to find in one cabin a sewing-machine, bought with the earnings of the occupant. We were surprised to find employment for her, if our friends send us no piece goods."

"Among these people I found many aged and infirm men and women, and the frail treatments which their only homes are entirely insufficient to protect them from. The most distressing laborer, which would seem upon us. The sufferings of those people, whose lives have been worn out in unpaid service, will be fearful. May the Lord open the hearts of our friends in the North to their relief."

"Sometimes I have seen people who they were better off at slavery; and the most pitiful tale that I have listened to concluded with these words: 'I have seen dark days since we became free, but I have seen brighter ones than I ever saw in slavery.'"

"Sometimes I have seen children who were born free. Without parents, with no friends, with not even a name, they are placed in our care. Many of our familiar friends here have namesakes among them—children of the same name as Edward Everett, Horacio Greeley, and even his Excellency Governor Sumner, are answered to by bright boys of African descent."

The headquarters of the Association in the Southwest are at Nashville, and it is becoming well understood that the Society giving the care of the freed people, Captain and Lieutenant-General Sherman, the contraband camps, Coloreds of colored regiments, houses of refuge, Surgeons in charge of colored hospitals, and all interested in the elevation of the African race, that Pennsylvania Association is organizing a permanent force.

"There is not a week that we are not applied to for help. 'Can you send us a teacher for our camp?' 'Have you clothing for women and children?' are frequent questions. We can answer them in the affirmative, as the means are provided by our friends at home."

The most painful feature of our work in Nashville is the number of destitute women and children who are continually arriving. But a few weeks since we were deluged with them. Our supply of goods was almost entirely

was so badly treated by Lee, and whose case was the subject of some controversy in the papers about the time of rebellion, is among them and is living near her aged and worthy parents.—Independent.

Friends, many of whom occupy high social positions are possessed of great wealth, are endeavoring to procure a pardon or commutation of sentence; but the people of Baltimore stand by Gen. Wallace and insist that to show leniency to Mrs. Hutches is to waffle with the best interests of the country.

Rev. C. W. Vining, who has safely returned as the journey in the East, thoughtfully brings us, among other curiosities, some of the newspapers published in Egypt and Turkey. They are in four languages, French, English, Armenian, and Greek. We cannot read them, but we can, and through his patience we have been gratified to see in their contents, and the materials of which newspapers are made up in the land of the Osmania. Our American readers is well represented: slaves, women and sinners, ploughs, axes and tools are advertised from the country. In each of the four languages are heralded the names of the remedies made up by our celebrated countrymen, Dr. J. C. Ayer & Co., of Lowell. They seemed not to be sold at home, and we have been glad to receive, and publish the certificates of the Musselmans who use them, to the cases which those medicines have made in the midst.

Special Notices.

A Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Female Antislavery Society will be held at 277 Fifth St., on Friday, 21st inst., at 3 o'clock p.m.

G. M. S. PIERCE, Sec'y.

Advertisements.

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